

Text of Tracy Callahan's comments before the  
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Good morning, Chairwoman Hardy and distinguished members of the White House Conference on Aging Policy Committee. I am Tracy Callahan, Chief Operating Officer for ZivaGuide, a division of MyZiva. Bob Abrams, founder and CEO of MyZiva extends his sincere apologies to the committee for his inability to attend as a result of scheduling conflicts. I am honored to appear before you to present some key policy recommendations which we feel would further our mutual goal in developing and promoting a marketplace that will optimally meet the needs of the new generation of mature consumers.

Over the past three years, we at MyZiva have been dedicated to building a community of more than a million people. Our MyZiva communities are continuously growing and developing to meet the multiple demands of an evolving society of aging individuals and the dynamic needs of the healthcare industry. We are committed to the access and delivery of customized healthcare information and resources through the use of internet technologies in order to educate and inform both the healthcare provider and consumer.

By creating, utilizing and leveraging internet technologies, we believe the government, non-profit and private sector – together – can more effectively educate, inform and empower healthcare consumers and their families.

By enlisting and partnering with local organizations in the community we can conduct grass roots campaigns that publicize the resources and technology solutions available to the mature consumer. The internet and other technologies increasingly serve a major role in the daily lives of the aging and elderly population and that of their families. Resources should be focused on not only promoting the existence of these technologies, but also on making these technologies easier to use and more accessible to this population.

The new generation of mature consumers will demonstrate greater sense of purchase power than any other generation before their time. In our efforts to develop informational products and services, we need to ensure that consumers are not treated in a patronizing

or disingenuous way. The new generation of mature consumers will need information and resources identifying their choices and options so they may be able to make independent decisions regarding their individual health and financial plans.

Lastly, we need to foster national and local partnerships within and among the public, private and not-profit sectors to overcome the barriers that prevent both the government and healthcare providers from reaching out to and connecting with the diverse aging population. The internet and other technologies provide the means and the medium in which the public, private, and non-profit stakeholders can promote their messages with the primary goal of helping all aging Americans access the information and services they require. By encouraging such public and private partnerships we may be able to rid the system of hypocrisy and move into an action phase in which we stop talking about what we should be doing and just start doing it.